THE SIGNATURE OF SPRING

As I stand by my window and breathe the fresh air, I notice Spring's signature penned everywhere:

The snow's disappearing beneath greening grass,
While buds and green sprouts are emerging at last.
New plumage embellishes birds on the wing,
And a fresh note of joy sparks each song that they sing.

An early Spring shower pours droplets of white,
As a wintering cloud slowly makes it's last flight.
In wakening woods I can hear peepers sing;
Redundant their song, yet as new as each Spring.

As I stand by my window and breathe God's fresh air, I rejoice in Spring's signature penned everywhere.

Loise Pinkerton Fritz

Ask the Lord for rain in the springtime; it is the Lord who sends the thunderstorms. He gives showers of rain to all people, and plants of the field to everyone.

Zechariah 10:1 NIV
The Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse & Health Ministry Program is offering a Day Retreat on Saturday, March 7, 2020 at Martina Spiritual Renewal Center (https://martinacenter.com/)

The retreat will be facilitated by Rev. Dr. Joan Prentice, M.Div., D.Min. who is the Founder, Executive Director, and Pastor of The Ephesus Project, a Pittsburgh nonprofit. Dr. Prentice has more than twenty years experience in pastoral ministry. She began as a staff pastor to new disciples at Mount Ararat Baptist Church in Pittsburgh. Her focus at Mt. Ararat was in pastoral care, spiritual counseling for new members, curriculum development, and volunteer training. After much discernment and prayer, Dr. Prentice established The Ephesus Project in 2013 and describes it as “Traditional Church in an Untraditional Way”. The Ephesus Project exists in community as a “Church without Walls” and holds true to the principles of the Christian faith but in creative ways of ministry.

Currently, Dr. Prentice devotes her time to teaching and developing leaders for church and community ministry in the 21st century such as New Paradigm Leadership Training, Grace Space Gatherings, Open Word Bible Study and Conversation, pastoral and leadership retreats, focus symposiums, and Mothers United in Christ. She resides in Pittsburgh with her husband Marvin, and is a mother of three adult children and a grandmother of eight.

The retreat begins with a continental breakfast at 8:00 a.m., the opening session begins at 9:00 a.m., and the retreat ends by 4:00 p.m. Lunch is simple with minimal talking in order to invite retreatants in giving time and space for self-reflection. Participants are invited to a time of prayer, solitude, quiet reflection, learning and fellowship. It is time away from both personal and professional responsibilities especially during this special season of Lent.

The cost for the Day Retreat is $55.00 per person and is payable to the Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse & Health Ministry Program. The cost is an extra $40.00 for retreatants who choose to stay overnight on Friday (dinner on your own) which is paid directly to Martina Spiritual Renewal Center. Space is limited for overnight retreatants, so early registration is encouraged. Handicap accessibility is available upon request.

The theme for this spiritual retreat is “Sacred Dance to the Rhythm of Life” which is designed as a contemplative healing retreat. In our busy lives especially those involved in ministry, we sometimes feel overwhelmed to the point of neglecting our own spiritual needs. We risk having little to pour out and then burn out. Retreatants will come together for healing, refreshment, and restoration in a safe, sacred space. There is a holy dance with which we are invited to enter into with the living Lord. As our Creator leads, we follow and find a deeper freedom in the sacred dance of the rhythm of life. “Praise the Lord. Sing to the Lord a new song, His praise in the assembly of the saints. Let them praise His name with dancing and make music to Him with tambourine and harp.” Psalms 149: 1 and 3 NIV.

Visit our website for more retreat details at https://bit.ly/2MbMetg
Join us and enroll in the Fall 2020 Course today!

- Location: UPMC Mercy Hospital, Pittsburgh, Pa. 15219
- Class size is limited to 20 participants
- Early bird discount must be postmarked by August 28, 2020
- Cost: $395 for Registered Nurses (RNs) which includes 34 continuing education credits
- Cost: $200 for non-registered nurses and RNs with inactive nursing licenses
- Pittsburgh Mercy employee discount
- Hybrid course: online and on-site classes (4 dates)
- Variety of Course instructors
- Limited, partial scholarships available upon request—see Course application
- Continental breakfast and parking included
- Call our office (412.232.5815) for our faith community/church group rate of 2 or more.

For the Course application, visit this link https://bit.ly/2uQTwNz

- RNs are commissioned as Faith Community Nurses. All other participants are commissioned as Health Ministers. Everyone receives a pin and certificate.
- RNs who attend the entire sessions, complete the online learning requirements, and complete an evaluation form for each module are awarded a certificate for 34 nursing continuing education credits (CEs). The University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (UPMC) is accredited as a provider of continuing nursing education by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's Commission on Accreditation (ANCC). UPMC and ANCC do not endorse any commercial products as a result of this CE activity.

Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse & Health Ministry Program

Health Ministry Educational Support Meetings—Spring 2020

Coming in May and June 2020

Theme: Spiritual Care of Individuals with Behavioral Health Concerns in Faith Communities Today

There is increased research on faith and mental illness. Many faith communities/churches have turned away from individuals who have behavioral health issues and/or their family members. Currently, there is a movement among clergy and faith communities to reach out to those with behavioral health concerns and provide programs to change our culture of fear and suspicion. Faith Community Nurses and Health Ministers are in unique positions to be change agents and assist in removing barriers to care for the mentally ill. We must reduce the stigma of mental illness... let’s talk about mental health. More details coming in March for dates, times, and locations of our Health Ministry Support Meetings this spring 2020 at our website link https://bit.ly/2V4Ombr
**Spring Cleaning**

**Health Ministry Workshops for Spring 2020**

**Phone Consultation for those locally or out of state**

Every faith community goes through challenging times such as dry periods when ministries are stuck in a rut and need some fresh ideas. Meeting the needs of parishioners of all ages can be time-consuming and requires creativity. This is required when:

- parishes are merging
- a pastor leaves and there is an unfilled vacancy
- a new pastor & family enter the church
- a growing membership especially with young families
- several homebound individuals and/or elderly with special needs.

This can be taxing even for an experienced faith community nurse and/or health minister. In fact, often clergy and faith leaders face compassion fatigue and burnout which accelerates parishioners’ needs not being met.

In these situations, **SPRING CLEANING** or innovative forms of ministry may be part of the answer. Having a “companion” to come along aside during these challenging times of a faith community can be very welcoming. **Remember the old say... many hands make light work.**

This means that people can do more things more quickly and easily when they work together! We would be happy to work with you, your clergy, and/or faith community team. Contact us as part of your planning this Spring 2020. Ask the Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse & Health Ministry Program for a presentation, workshop, or retreat at your church and/or organization. For phone consultation call us at 412.232.5815

To learn more, visit [https://bit.ly/2T5X7SM](https://bit.ly/2T5X7SM)

Contact us at ParishNurse@pittsburghmercy.org or 412.232.5815
The Coronavirus... Teaching Others Good Hygiene Practices

There is no doubt that following the news can be frightening sometimes especially to those with limited, medical knowledge. This is a time for faith community nurses to step-up quickly and teach their faith communities about staying healthy during influenza (“the flu”) season which peaked in February. The new, novel coronavirus (COVID-19) that emerged in December 2019 in Wuhan City, China has become an international, public concern. But the good news is that the World Health Organization (WHO) and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) are committed to coordinating efforts to decreasing the spread and finding a vaccine for the coronavirus. The best prevention is to avoid exposure to the virus and using good hygiene practices such as washing your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, coughing and/or sneezing into your elbow or tissue, disinfecting touched surfaces and objects, and staying home when sick. Also, remember the flu vaccine is still available so encourage parishioners to get one today if they haven’t already... it is not too late.
The symptoms of the coronavirus are high fever, cough, and difficulty breathing. The diagnosis of the Coronavirus has been challenging since it resembles the flu or a bad cold. The time between exposure of the coronavirus and the onset of symptoms may be from a few days to two weeks. In the mean time, it is always best to side on caution and seek medical attention quickly especially if one has recently traveled outside the USA.
To learn more about the coronavirus, visit these 2 links:
https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019

A Cup of Morning Joe... Coffee!

Research is finding that there are more and more health benefits of coffee than just giving us a boost in the morning. According to the Mayo Clinic, coffee may protect against Parkinson’s disease, type 2 diabetes, and liver disease, including liver cancer. Coffee appears to help with improving our cognitive function and lowers the risk of depression. This is based on a cup or two a day, since more may cause health problems. Also, be watchful of the amount of sugar and cream that is added.
To learn more about coffee from the Mayo Clinic, visit at https://mayo.in/32eYIXS

Our Email Address: ParishNurse@pittsburghmercy.org

We enjoy hearing from our E-Newsletter readers about your faith community ministries. Send an email with a short description of your recent church event and we will include it in our section “News from You!” If you like, include a photo of yourself at your event too.
If you should no longer wish to receive communications from the Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse & Health Ministry Program, please unsubscribe by contacting us at 412.232.5815 or email ParishNurse@pittsburghmercy.org Thank you.

Pittsburgh Mercy invites you to “like” us!
Lent is always a special time of the year where there is a focus on repentance, fasting, acts of charity, and preparation for the coming of Easter (Pascha). It is a time for self-examination and quiet reflection. Asking ourselves such questions as the following: Who is my Creator calling me to be? Am I fulfilling my true purpose in this world? Is my wealth more precious to me than my own spouse and/or family? Is God calling me to use my gifts, talents, and skills in a new, creative service toward others? Where can I volunteer my time? Am I spiritually growing?

These questions are only a handful, but are very thought-provoking words as we journey during Lent and into Easter. They help us to look deep within ourselves and reflect on how we can better serve our Creator and others who are in need.

A favorite author of many... no matter what faith tradition one holds... is Henri J.M. Nouwen. In the book “Lent and Easter: Wisdom from Henri J.M. Nouwen” there is a daily reflection from Ash Wednesday through the second Sunday of Easter which offers an appropriate theme, a Scripture, a prayer, and a suggested activity for spiritual growth. Nouwen’s words are inspiring and challenging as we become more aware of personal sin, the sins of others, and the sin that is found in our larger society and culture. However, there is also the balance on love and acceptance that our Creator still has for humanity. So, come, and join in this Lenten journey. To all those who are seeking to learn and commune with God and others... come. May the weary spiritual traveler of Lent move forward to the joy of Easter and Pascha blessing.

Day #12: Bringing Pain Home
Your pain is deep, and it won’t just go away.... Your call is to bring that pain home. As long as your wounded part remains foreign to your adult self, your pain will injure you as well as others. Yes, you have to incorporate your pain into your self and let it bear fruit in your heart and the hearts of others.
This is what Jesus means when he asks you to take up your cross. He encourages you to recognize and embrace your unique suffering and to trust that your way to salvation lies therein. Taking up your cross means, first of all, befriending your wounds and letting them reveal to you your own truth.

Henri J.M. Nouwen

Passover begins at sundown
April 8, 2020
Happy Passover to all our Jewish friends and neighbors!

Blessings to All
Easter Sunday April 12
Eastern Orthodox Pascha (Easter) April 19
Christ is Risen!
He is Risen Indeed!
The Scope and Standards of Practice for Faith Community Nursing provides a definitive resource for the Faith Community Nurse (FCN) to use in decision-making when validating, or analyzing professional practice. It guides the FCN in practice within:

* Preparation and educational programs  
* Role description and performance evaluations  
* Policies and procedures  
* Quality improvement endeavors  
* Competencies and compliances

With the nursing process to assess wholistic care – balance of body, mind, and spirit, the FCN uses evidence-based practice for the intentional focus on spiritual well-being through education, counseling, prayer, presence, active listening, and advocacy. As health care delivery expands more into the community setting, multiple venues are available for FCNs to provide hope, healing, peace, purpose, trust and contentment – even when apart from cure.

With informed attention to ethics, cultural competence, care within life transitions, behavioral health, and addiction, the 3rd Edition of the Scope and Standards speaks to the demanding challenges of current practice. The six standards of practice and ten standards of professional performance are the criteria by which all FCNs are held accountable.

To learn more, click on this link: [https://bit.ly/2BaiGXc](https://bit.ly/2BaiGXc)

Electronic Documentation System for Faith Community Nurses

This user-friendly electronic program was designed by FCNs, rigorously tested by FCNs, and is currently used by FCNs nationally. This documentation system offers the following:

* Documents client problems easily by using a concise list built-in to the system with drop-down boxes (physical, mental, spiritual, social, financial and relational areas)

* Rates the problem initially and at follow-up assessments using a 1-5 scale

* Demonstrates the outcomes of your FCN interventions

* Includes many more useful features!

New YouTube Video of the Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse Documentation System at: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XNKGJx1Fex8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XNKGJx1Fex8)

Contact us!  
ParishNurse@pittsburghmercy.org  412-232-5815

Email us, if interested in our upgrade Version 5.1
Health Observances
To encourage others in balancing body, mind, and spirit. Please note: This is not an inclusive list of all health observances.

- **March**
  - Alcohol Awareness Month
  - National Autism Awareness Month
  - National Child Abuse Prevention Month
  - National Donate Life Month
  - Sexual Assault Awareness & Prevention Month
  - Sports Eye Safety Awareness Month
  - National Public Health Week—Healthiest Nation 2030 Changing Our Future Together April 6-12 [www.nphw.org](http://www.nphw.org/)
  - World Health Day April 7

- **April**
  - National Kidney Month [https://www.kidney.org/](https://www.kidney.org/)

- **May**
  - Arthritis Awareness Month
  - Better Hearing & Speech Month
  - Food Allergy Action Month
  - Healthy Vision Month
  - Hepatitis Awareness Month
  - Mental Health Month
  - Melanoma/Skin Cancer Detection and Prevention Month
  - National Asthma & Allergy Awareness Month
  - National Osteoporosis Month
  - National Stroke Awareness Month

Visit these 2 links to learn more about Autism. [https://bit.ly/36hM8rO](https://bit.ly/36hM8rO)
Medical alert bracelets [https://bit.ly/2rQcXVd](https://bit.ly/2rQcXVd)
Explains Autism, awareness & much more.

- **June**
  - Alzheimer’s & Brain Awareness
  - Men’s Health
  - Myasthenia Gravis Awareness
  - National Aphasia Awareness
  - National Safety Month
  - Fireworks Eye Safety & Cataract Awareness
  - National Scleroderma Awareness

The next edition of “The Faith Connection” is **May 2020**. If you have news to share, please email us by April 10th. We love hearing from our readers!
REGISTRATION FORM : Day Retreat 2020

Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse & Health Ministry Program
A part of Pittsburgh Mercy and Trinity Health, serving in the tradition of the Sisters of Mercy

Sacred Dance to the Rhythm of Life

Saturday, March 7, 2020  Registration & Continental Breakfast 8 a.m.
at Martina Spiritual Renewal Center, 5244 Clarwin Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15229

Please send completed registration form along with a check of $55.00 made payable to the Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse & Health Ministry Program by March 2, 2020 to: Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse & Health Ministry Program, Mercy Health Center, 1515 Locust Street, Suite 705, Pittsburgh, PA 15219-5154. For more information, call 412.232.5815 or email ParishNurse@pittsburghmercy.org Or visit https://www.pittsburghmercy.org

Name _______________________________________________________________________________________________________

First Name ___________________________________________________________________________________________

Middle Initial ___________________________________________________________________________________________

Last Name _______________________________________________________________________________________________

Address ________________________________________________________________________________________________

City __________________________ State ______   ZIP ____________ Telephone ________________________________

Email Address __________________________________________________________________________________________

Name of Church or Organization ______________________________________________________________________________

Address ________________________________________________________________________________________________

City __________________________ State ____________ ZIP ____________ Telephone ________________________________

Denomination __________________________________________________________________________________________

Your role within your church/organization (please check all that apply):

__ Clergy  __ __Social minister

__ Member/attendee  __ Social worker

__ Health ministry coordinator RN  __ Nursing student

__ Coordinator health minister  __ Volunteer

__ Faith community nurse (volunteer)  __ Pittsburgh Mercy employee

__ Faith community nurse (salaried)  __ Seminarian

__ Health Minister  __ Registered nurse

__ Other ___________________________________________________________________________________________

__ Check if special dietary need and/or handicap accommodations are requested. Please explain:

____________________________________________________________________________________________

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____________________________________________________________________________________________

☐ I permit my name & church/organization to be published on my nametag and in this retreat participant listing.

☐ I would like to receive information about continuing education opportunities from Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse & Health Ministry Program and Pittsburgh Mercy i.e. our free monthly E-Newsletter, The Faith Connection.

☐ I prefer not to be contacted.

NOTE: The Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse & Health Ministry Program and Pittsburgh Mercy do not sell or otherwise share information with third-party vendors. You reserve the right to revoke your permission at any time. For more information, contact the Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse & Health Ministry Program at 412.232.5815 or email